

MARK HOTCHKISS

I CAN'T SEE PEOPLE SMILE,
SO I LIKE TO HEAR THEM LAUGH.

Bennett, Helen Christine

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HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

"I Can't See People Smile, So I Like To Hear Them Laugh!"

It is this philosophy of life that keeps Mark Hotchkiss, a blind man, happy—Sixteen years ago he lost his sight—Since then he has established his own manufacturing company, and has designed all the devices which his shops turn out—The inspiring story of how he overcame his handicap.

By Helen Christine Bennett

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MARK HOTCHKISS was fifty years old when he lost his sight. He was then a contractor for cement work, which meant constant supervision in the field. His young manhood had been spent in selling farm machinery and in farming. With this experience as a background, he deliberately set to work to "show the world that a blind man can make a living."

Through sixteen years he has struggled to that end; at first, with so little progress that he had to borrow money to rescue his infant business from bankruptcy. To-day he owns and operates the Hotchkiss Products Company, Incorporated, of Binghamton, New York, which makes steel forms, or molds used in shaping concrete into paving blocks, sections of curbing, supports for bridges, and the like.

These forms were designed and patented by Hotchkiss after his blindness. All his inventions grew out of his struggle in the darkness to do something worth-while. They began as pieces of pasteboard boxes, which he bent and cut into the forms to be tested out in steel. They are now used all over this country, and as far away as Australia. The first steel forms ever used in the laying of concrete pavements and roads were his.

Mark Hotchkiss has never capitalized his blindness. The products of his factory have been sold on their merits; many of his customers have no idea that they are dealing with a blind man. At sixty-six, he has earned the right to say, as he did to me:

"This thing that I set out to do, I have done."

WHEN I first saw Mark Hotchkiss in his factory at Binghamton, I was at once impressed with the strength of the man. If he had not told me his age, I should have underestimated it by ten years.

Possessing a superb physique, tall and square-shouldered, Hotchkiss gives no indication of the terrific struggle he has made to demonstrate that a man handicapped as he has been can yet give to other men something worth-while. His blindness is not apparent. His face is kindly, humorous, and flashes into broad smiles as he expounds the wonderful philosophy that carries him on. His friends say of him that he "radiates sunshine;" and it is true that in his presence there is

a sense of brightness and of warmth and of unquenchable optimism.

To talk with him is a rare privilege, largely because he has put away reticence with other vanities, and gives himself frankly and sincerely. He is naturally a fluent talker. Not only is he able to share with his listeners his enthusiasm for living, but he can actually take them into that world of his in which spiritual vision must replace physical sight. His voice is deep, controlled, and musical. It is especially delightful when employed in spinning one of his famous yarns. It is easy to understand why he is sought as a companion, why men like to go fishing with this kindly philosopher who has such a rare gift for fellowship.

BENDING pasteboard into designs, and patiently revising the models made up in his shops, Mark Hotchkiss has produced five patented forms which have commercial value.

It was two years after the loss of his sight when the idea of a form of steel into which concrete could be poured came to him through a suggestion of his sister-in-law, who was also his secretary. Devoted to his interests, as are indeed not only his family but also every worker in his factory, she thought of pasteboard as a possible means for the release of the inventive genius she knew to be dormant within her blind brother-in-law. She brought him the pasteboard and asked him to try.

"I believe I can," he admitted, as his fingers went over the board. "I believe I can."

A few days later he showed his brother a form in pasteboard intended for reproduction in steel. It was a model of frames for concrete sidewalks.

"Don't tell anyone," he begged. "But let us have it made up, and then just you and I go together to test it."

His brother agreed; the form was made, and those two proceeded to a lonely spot to try it out. Mark Hotchkiss helped mix the concrete. He could not pour it into the frames, but he stooped and tested the hardening mixture many times. When his sensitive fingers found the right degree of stiffness he directed:

"Now take off the side rails, and tell me whether it breaks at the side or not."

There was an anxious wait, and then his brother said:

"Mark, the rails are out, and the

cement is perfectly firm at the edge. No a crumble. You've done it!"

In 1909 the first sidewalk ever laid with steel forms was put down in Binghamton with the frames designed by Mark Hotchkiss. A year later, he took out his first patents.

At this time, Hotchkiss had no idea of turning manufacturer. He was still running his contracting business, supervising the work himself, although it was awkward and difficult for him to manage. But after a disastrous experience in trying to manufacture his forms by contract and market them through a selling company, he realized that, if success was to come to this venture, he would have to make and sell the forms himself. Accordingly, he bought out the bankrupt company, borrowed three thousand dollars to help reorganize the business, and set up in a tiny shop to make his own forms.

The World War, which put an end to road and sidewalk construction in general, reduced the business to a minimum. But by this time Hotchkiss had determined to go ahead as a manufacturer. He had a shop started; he was in debt several thousand dollars. He went after, and obtained, orders for making dashboards and running-boards for auto trucks.

By the time the war was over he had established a paying business in supplying these, and in the manufacture of metal stair-risers and treads. During the slump of 1920, auto orders were canceled by the hundred, and for a time it looked as if the little business, like many others far larger, could not survive.

BUT construction work was beginning again and, by sheer refusal to fail, Hotchkiss kept on his feet, swung his business through the crisis, and was ready for the expansion that followed. In 1921 the little firm began to prosper mightily. It had gone back mainly to the making of the concrete forms, for which orders piled in. Before the year was up, it was necessary to find larger quarters. A good-sized factory, with its own railroad spur, and with ample grounds for expansion, was purchased.

Even with increased facilities, the place is now running night and day.

During the past six years, Mark Hotchkiss's gifted fingers have wrought out of pasteboard four other patented forms, now being manufactured and sold by him.



Jen looked down at Peter, at the thin, streaked face and the sensitive mouth. What was he doing to her, this little, lonely child? What was he doing to her?

quilt. Jen remembered the very words of it now; she had let Allie read it, because Allie had seemed to have a share in the giving of it. No, she didn't need the quilt; but she wished she'd called up Allie before she left!

They bade each other good night a little constrainedly. Someone had to sleep on the cot in the up-stairs hall, and Jen said she'd just as soon. They let her, as they had all used to let her do things for them.

The cot was not very easy and it was not quite long enough, and Jen could not

bare space above the little brown desk, where the "Shepherd Boy" had been hanging; the maple leaf quilt on one of Julie's beds; little Peter's fingers trying so hard to manage his fork, his bread, his glass of milk. She felt hard toward Julie and Pen because they didn't want Peter. Julie, with all her money and her useless life—a fritterer, she was—shirking this responsibility! And Pen, getting too scratchy, too fond of her own freedom; why, it would be the making of Pen to have a child to care for!

little sound. It was someone sobbing, tight little sobs, muffled, maybe, in a pillow. Who slept next her here? The twins—and Peter. She got up softly, went to the door and opened it, ever so gently. The light from the window fell upon the twins, their freckled faces calm and untroubled in sleep. It was Peter! She went over to him.

"There, Peter, don't cry!" she whispered. Peter whirled on her, one small fist doubled, struck at her. Jen only patted him more gently, touched the soft

Following the sidewalk forms, came a wall form for foundation work; a fence post form; then an improved interlocking wall form, which has been on the market a very short time; and, last of all, a new design for laying concrete roads. It is already being sold in large quantities.

Not discounting the excellent and efficient service rendered Mark Hotchkiss in office and shop by his devoted employees (and Hotchkiss insists upon mention of this fact as a vital element of his business), no one can visit his factory without seeing clearly that the business is *his*, planned and watched and guarded by him in the most intensive way.

His routine is arranged for a man who has lost his sight. His order blanks, shop records, and cost records are of his own design. Every morning, as soon as Mr. Hotchkiss arrives, his bookkeeper comes to his office and reads to him the records of the day before. Through these records, minutely kept, Mark Hotchkiss relives the previous day in his shops. If one sheet of steel bears a time charge too great for its handling he presses a button, summons the foreman, and inquires the cause. In this painstaking way, he makes up for the lack of his actual presence in his factory. His secretary also reads to him every letter that comes.

"ONE of the most difficult tasks I have had," he said, as we talked at his home one evening, "is to persuade my employees to let me do my share of the job. I have very intelligent and capable people about me and, naturally, they try to relieve me all they can. At one time they wanted to save me, by leaving only the most important mail for my consideration. But since most of our orders, complaints, and inquiries for special products come to us through correspondence, it is vitally necessary that I read every letter. This is the only way I can get at the reaction of our customers. I think I have at last convinced my force that, down to the last circular, the mail merits my careful personal attention.

"Now my secretary reads every letter and circular to me. It takes several hours—sometimes the greater part of the day—to dispose of the mail, for it frequently involves making estimates. These I go over with the nephew whose business it is to send them out. Again, I may have to decide on supplies for the factory. Or perhaps I have an order for special forms. These I design, and go over with my superintendent, who is to make them for me. When I have any spare time, I use it in making new products or devices which

will enable our machinery to do better work. Let me show you."

Mrs. Hotchkiss promptly supplied her husband with a pasteboard box. It happened to be a cereal box. Taking a knife from his pocket, Mr. Hotchkiss began to bend and cut. When he finished, he had a design for a metal reel, simply made but, even to my untrained eyes, efficient.

"I planned this a few days ago," he explained. "It is intended for winding wire, which is usually wound on wooden reels. This design will be inexpensive, and satisfactory too.

"You see now," he said, "how I work. But at times when labor was short I have stood for hours in the shop and helped



Mark Hotchkiss, a blind manufacturer of Binghamton, New York. He owns and operates the Hotchkiss Steel Products Company, Incorporated, which makes steel forms, or molds, used in shaping concrete into paving blocks, sections of curbing, supports for bridges, and other purposes. Mr. Hotchkiss, who is sixty-six years old, designs these forms in pasteboard with his skilled fingers. Before he lost his sight, he was a machinery salesman in the West, a homesteader in South Dakota, and a contractor. Apparently helpless, when his eyes failed him at the age of fifty, he determined to make good, and this determination has resulted in the splendid business which he now owns

shear steel. The machinery is all protected, and I know it well, although I have never seen it. I can stand in a particular place, and put through a particular operation in routine almost as well as if I could see what I am doing.

"Just four months ago, we were so busy that I pitched in again. This time I helped unload a car of steel. Because I am so strong, I was of real value here, despite my lack of sight.

"Now that I've shown you all this," he said, "won't you come out and see the garden?"

He rose and led the way.

NO LESS than his pride in his business is Mark Hotchkiss's pride in the house he has built for himself and his family. Distinctive in design, it is a home to be proud of. As we walked through the grounds and I listened to him talk of the roses and the strawberries, I remembered what one of his financial advisers had said to me the day before.

"You know," said this financier, "during the slump, Hotchkiss's affairs were not going any too well. One day it occurred to me that his home was too expensive a place to be run by a man whose affairs had reached such a crisis.

"I went over to see Hotchkiss, intending to tell him that he ought to give up his big place, and take a much smaller one. Hotchkiss met me at the door with a radiant smile of welcome. I had never seen the place before. He showed me all through the house, and then he said:

"Now come into the garden. I want you to look at the roses." As we walked along, he would touch a rose and say, 'Just look at that. Did you ever see a more magnificent rose?'

"Afterward we went through the vegetable garden, and as we were returning a Jersey cow came out from the barn. 'That cow,' Hotchkiss said, pointing to the Jersey, 'is the finest cow I ever saw. Did you ever see a finer one?' he demanded proudly.

"Well, believe me, I came away without saying one word about his giving up that home. How could I? As it turned out, business began to pick up almost at once, and there was no necessity for the sacrifice anyway."

HOTCHKISS'S deep content in his business and in his home is easily understood when we look at them as the symbols of his victory over a series of calamities, the last and most staggering of which was the loss of his sight.

Disasters followed him all through his career as a farmer and homesteader. The decline of his sight hampered and obstructed his business as a contractor. Not until, with his back against the wall, sightless, and almost sixty years of age, fighting that last battle through the slump of 1920, did he win his fight to establish his business.

His father was a farmer in Onondaga County, New York, and until Mark was twenty-one he worked on the farm. He got his early education at the district school. When he was in his teens, he was sent to take a business course at the Monroe Collegiate Institute; but he had to stop before he could be graduated.

When he was twenty-one, his brothers and sisters were old enough to carry on the farm work, so Mark Hotchkiss went West with an uncle who was a dealer in farm machinery, in Minnesota. To fit himself to sell such machinery he spent some time in the harvester works, mainly in the study of the new twine binders for grain, then just being (Continued on page 222)

The World That Gets Up When You Go to Bed

My experiences with nature's little folks who kick off the covers after the sun has gone down—Once I gave a "Bug Party;" another night I attended a rabbit dance; and the finest concert I ever heard was a mockingbird pouring out his irrepressible soul to a moonlight-flooded earth

By Charles A. David

DRAWINGS BY THE AUTHOR

SOME years ago a friend and I spent a glorious June day, fishing—though fish played a mighty small part in the outing. We had gone on a dinky little train to a station called White Oak (so named I suppose for the reason that there was not a white oak tree in ten miles), and expected to catch the down-train home in the afternoon. But it was one of those roads that did not bother about schedules—and the afternoon train did not come.

I was not much surprised, as only a few days before I had been a passenger on it, and the train had stopped every once in a while to "fix something," and finally had had to go back five miles looking for the cowcatcher, which had worked loose and dropped off in a ditch.

The road was a short line, serving a mountain community that had no hide-bound notions as to set times for arriving or departing. If the train did not come one day, its patrons did not mind a bit waiting until the next; in fact, it rather suited them better, as sitting around and waiting was more in their line than traveling.

There was no telephone or telegraph—no way of knowing whether the train had started for home or not; so there was nothing for my friend and me to do but sit down, and hope. We sat on an empty chicken crate, and as we waited the sun went down and the bull-bats came out to keep us company, staging a performance we would have enjoyed more if we had not remembered that we were fifteen miles from home, and the walking none too good.

Then the red-wing black-birds in the nearby marsh called it a day and went to bed, and we were left alone. Finally, we set off down the track—which was little more than two streaks of rust, with cross-ties so unevenly placed that walking degenerated into a hop-skip-and-a-jump.

But the walk down this old roadbed proved to be a revelation—an adventure

into No Man's Land—an experience we have never forgotten. The red glow in the west faded to pink, and then to a shade I can see, but have no word to express. As the shadows darkened, the little leather-wing bats appeared from nowhere, and went rowing past, or flapped far down the track, only to wheel and come swinging back in their zigzag fashion.

As we passed cane brakes and alder thickets we could hear the low good nights of sleepy birds, settling down for the night, the occasional splash of muskrats among the lily pads, the tiny squeak of meadow mice, and mysterious rustlings we could not place.

WHEN it grew darker, the lightning bugs came out. The twinkling sparks seemed to be signaling each other, while 'way down the track still other lightning bugs were swinging their lanterns, as if to tell us the way was clear.

Then, from the darkness, a bullfrog, with startling suddenness, intoned the syllables, "Jug-o'-Rum! Jug-o'-Rum!"

and from the opposite direction boomed the answer, "More-Rum! More-Rum!" in a bass so deep it hurt our throats. Next, the sopranos and the altos took it up. The chorus swelled and swelled, then died away, until we could once more hear ourselves talk.

A little farther on our way, we skirted a bog that was fairly vocal with the trills of what must have been a thousand toads—gentleman toads, lady toads, baby toads—all singing at once, without regard for time or rhythm. From the grass on either side loud-mouthed crickets were leading the orchestra of creeping and crawling things; while occasional beetles, like miniature Zeppelins, zoomed slowly by our ears.

From a willow a lone katydid was trying to get up an argument with another of its kind, as to whether katy did, or katy didn't, and from somewhere among the weeds a long-horn grasshopper gave a good imitation of the whizzing "z-r-z-r-z-r" of a rattlesnake. The mellow bugling of some old hound, probably dreaming of frosty nights and possum trails, could be heard from a distant farmhouse.

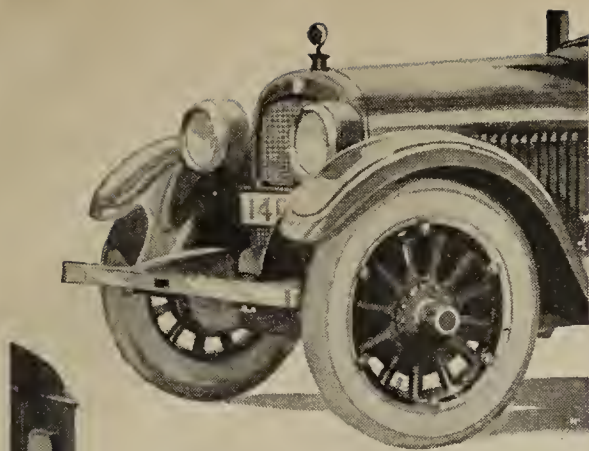
Down the river came the mysterious chant of a whip-poor-will, that solitary bird of twilight, who does not do a single lick of work until it is time to go to bed, and knocks off when it is time to get up. His voice is one of the loneliest sounds in nature, and it is no wonder that superstition has invested him with occult powers, and associated his call note with bodings of ill. To most people, he is a voice, and nothing more, as few have ever seen him.

When we at last reached home, hungry, tired, bedraggled and muddy, we were almost sorry the tramp was over. Every step of the way had brought sounds we had never heard, sensations we had never had before, and for the time being we had become a part of the throbbing life of the night.

Ever since that wonderful walk, I have realized more and more that there are two



The log on which I was dressing turned over and I lost my shoes. So I wrapped one foot in a towel, put my hat on the other one, and walked home



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"I Can't See People Smile, So I Like To Hear Them Laugh!"

(Continued from page 67)

introduced. When he joined his uncle he was put into the office, but finally got out into the field as an expert in demonstrating and repairing the new machines.

From his uncle's place he drifted to Fergus Falls, Minnesota, where he developed into a full-fledged machinery salesman, at fifty dollars a month and expenses, to start. He sold machinery for two years; but the air was full of talk of the rich prairies of South Dakota and of the homesteads to be had for the taking, and finally, urged by his uncle, he gave up his job and went farther West.

He secured a homestead, and with another young chap, who settled beside him, he "bached" it all summer and opened up land. No crop can be grown on prairie land the first year, and with the building of their shanties, the expense for teams and machines, the two boys were "broke" when fall arrived.

"I had bought a very fine fur coat while I was a salesman," said Mark Hotchkiss; "I had to leave it at a hotel for board that fall. I was entirely out of cash.

"I had proved up my land, though, and in February I sold out my horses and went to the county seat, and again got a job selling farm implements. There I met my wife. She had land in an adjoining county which she had homesteaded. When we were married, it was to her land we went. We kept house those days in a shanty, ten feet by twelve, and, although my wife was a university graduate and her home had been one of comparative luxury, she bravely endured all the hardships of pioneer life.

"**W**E AND all our neighbors settled in high hopes. We had a quarter section of land which was rich and fertile; the future looked bright. But we had counted without the weather. Season after season, droughts and hot, blasting winds ruined our grain as it ripened. Still we laughed, and struggled on. Two children who were born to us, died; and, after that—we laughed less.

"Finally, I imported a flock of five hundred sheep. They proved a lucky investment. At the end of three years, I had paid for the flock out of the profits, paid my debts, and stood ready for the next venture.

"Ours was a grain-raising country; of that I had not a doubt. Accordingly, I staked all I had—every cent I had saved all my life up to that time—on the next year's crop. The grain grew amazingly, and our hopes were boundless. All summer we planned the great things we were to do when the wheat was sold. And then—when the grain was in the ear—we stood in the doorway of our home, and helplessly watched it die, burnt up by the fierce wind. In three days it had gone, taking all we had with it.

I had always said I would never leave land cwing me anything, but I had to then. There was nothing left to go on. We came back to the state where I was born; to its friendly green hills and val-

leys, to start all over again. We had only what was in our trunks; no more.

"The cement business was new then; but I investigated it and believed it had a future. I found work, and before long I was in the contracting business for myself. I bought the land on which to build a home for the faithful wife who had so staunchly stood by me in all my hardships. Before the home was built, however, she was taken from me, and I was alone. To help me through the loneliness her mother and her sister came to stay with me. Some years later, her sister became my wife.

"To return to business: I put up the first cement building in Binghamton, a furniture warehouse which is now used as a manufacturing plant. I was inexperienced in the contracting business, and the cement work itself was new. Still, I prospered, and laid some money aside for the rainy day that even then was on the way.

"**O**NE day, as I was going down-town, things suddenly blurred before my eyes. This happened several times. Each time I thought I was going to have one of the severe headaches to which I was subject—but the headaches did not follow! Someone suggested that I needed glasses. I had my eyes examined and fitted, but the glasses did not help. Then I realized that my sight was failing.

"I had always possessed the keenest vision. In the old days, when I went hunting, I could always see farther through the woods than the other fellows; now I could feel my range of vision gradually shortening.

"I knew that something serious was impending. Leaving my business to get along as best it could, I went to doctor after doctor. For two years I did nothing but hunt specialists. I took hot baths—all kinds of cures; but all the time my sight was steadily failing. The doctors who examined me said that, physically, I was in almost perfect condition; but that, for some unknown reason, the optic nerve was dying.

"At the end of two years, my sight had become very dim. One morning my wife brought me a Rose of Sharon which she had grown. I stretched out my fingers, but I could not see the rose at all! At last the thing had come.

"Mark, what is the matter? Can't you see it?" my wife asked anxiously.

"No, Mamie," I answered, "I can't! I shall never see anything again!"

"Then I went up to my room for an hour."

Frank as he was with me, giving generously of his intimate experience for the sake of others who may read this tale, Mark Hotchkiss has never told any human being what that hour meant. But when he came down-stairs, feeling his way quietly, and entered the room where his stricken wife and her sister waited for him, his head was high, his hands were steady, and his voice was firm as he said:

"If ten or fifteen residents of a community could be persuaded to *coöperate* in improving their home grounds, the cost of expert advice would be much lessened, and the improvement would be remarkable. There seems no reason why any community should not take matters into its collective hands, and through coöperation arrange for the care of home grounds so that, at a much lessened cost to home owners, every place would always be at its best."

"The ordinary suburban lot," I said, "is flat. Now what can be done if you happen to buy a hill?"

Mr. Vitale's face lighted with enthusiasm.

"Oh, where God has done so much of the work for you," he exclaimed, "you are fortunate! Hills are a delight. It is flat ground that is difficult, because dirt has to be carried in and grading done. You let hills alone as much as you can, study them, and adjust your work to them."

"Hollows are the things to be done away with. If your home is below street level, it may yield a pretty sunken garden. But from a sanitary standpoint this is a doubtful advantage, as the drainage will present a serious problem. For this reason, sunken plots should, when possible, be graded and raised to street level."

"YOU asked me what could be done with a waste, a place that was practically a desert. Look at these."

I carefully went over half a dozen photographs which Mr. Vitale spread out on his desk.

"But these are in the country," I protested.

"They are in the center of Cleveland, Ohio," said Mr. Vitale. "When we began work on that place, it was what had been the site of four city houses. They had been torn down, and the space occupied by them and their small yards was approximately one and one-quarter acres. It was mainly filled with bricks and mortar, and it was as level as a table. The pond you see in the photograph was the cellar of one of the houses. Dirt was hauled in, and graded to make the cascades and the gently rising path of stepping stones. All the plants and trees were brought to the place practically full grown. And they have lived. The rocks, also, were hauled in. It is not easy to make over a place like this."

"But how long would it take?" I asked. "These things look as if they had been there for years. Surely, a garden like this must have time to settle."

Mr. Vitale scanned the pictures ap-
praisingly.

"There is nothing there," he said with finality, "that cannot be duplicated in six months! It might be less expensive to grow such a garden, but it would take years, and perhaps the cost of the care of the plants in that time would not leave so wide a margin. We understand how to move plants now—even large ones."

"But the home owner who wants the best for his money will find amusement and recreation in scouting for plants. Besides, his home grounds set with such finds will have an added joy in that they represent him in their selection. No plant bought at a nursery ever quite equals a roadside discovery of one's own!"

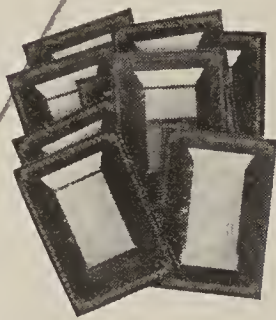


—“mother will never know”

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And then he knew!

THIS was the second dance in a month, and both times the girls seemed to avoid him. He had decided to stop going out socially *anywhere*.

And as he sat alone, hidden by the draperies, he had heard it. Nan and Fred had stopped right on the other side of the curtain to talk about him. He knew they were justified in what they said, and he decided right then what he would do about it!

Nearly all young men are inclined to have a grimy-looking skin, spotted with blackheads. Few men realize that this hinders their success in life. Pompeian Massage Cream is the certain way to help you overcome this handicap by giving you a clear, ruddy complexion.

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"Now, Mamie, we can do with this thing what we will. The hardest part is over; we know now what we must face. If we want to accept it as disaster, it can overwhelm us; but if we want to make it opportunity, we can! I have lost my sight; but I want to go out and show the world that a blind man can give it something worth-while; and if you'll stand by, I'll do it."

In one brief hour, Mark Hotchkiss had fought the biggest battle of his life, and he had won!

"My wife got up and crossed the room to my side," he said. "She began standing by then, and she has stood by ever since. So have they all—her family and mine. And with their help I have done this thing I have set out to do."

"It is all summed up in two words," he concluded: "I will." I was determined to keep on top, regardless. When I once accepted the inevitable, it wasn't so hard."

AND because Mark Hotchkiss has shown himself so generous, because he had shared with me a poignant experience which even with his generosity could only be shared with effort, I dared one more question.

"Mr. Hotchkiss," I said, "tell me, will you, how the world looks to you? Tell me how we, who are outside your world, can help you, and what we do to hurt—unknowing?"

He spoke slowly, but with conviction. "The world is not dark," he said, "in the sense that you suppose. It is true that I cannot see; but I have a sense of light and of darkness. I can see no form or color. But since my blindness my memory and imagination have quickened."

"I literally see all the time. I see the machinery in the shop, the workers, the things that I handle. I see you. I suppose what I see is really nothing like you, but I have a distinct form in mind. It is so clear that I could draw it if I possessed the power to draw."

"The improvement in my memory is so great that it is hardly credible. I can carry apparently unlimited details in my mind; and I revive details of thirty and forty and fifty years ago which I thought I had completely forgotten."

"Not so long ago, I was taken in an auto to the home of my boyhood, the farm in New York State, which I had not visited in thirty years. I had never been on these roads in a car; and yet, by the very roll and lay of the land, I knew when we passed every neighbor's house; I called out as we approached the fence that divided my father's farm from the next one. I can follow the streets in my own city by a sort of sixth sense, which feels the roll of the earth."

"What is read to me produces a far deeper impression than in the days when I had my sight. My wife reads to me every day, and I remember practically all that she reads."

"You asked me what things hurt a man who has no sight. One is the fact that people take his handicap so seriously. A blind man has on his hands the task of not taking his condition too seriously. It doesn't help matters to have other folks contradict his attitude."

"The intensely sympathetic reaction of his own family hurts too. For example,"

he said simply, "it bothers me to know that my wife takes this so much harder than I do."

"Then there is the occasional acquaintance who passes me by without troubling to speak, because he knows I can't see. What he does *not* understand is that, with my quickened hearing, I can recognize almost any voice I have ever heard before. *I hate to be left out.* If folks would just treat me as they did when I saw, I'd feel much better."

"There is also the human wolf who, like his brother, will jump on the wounded member of the pack and devour him. I've met him in business. But I have also met—and far more often—the chap who will stretch out his hand to help the wounded fellow."

"Just yesterday a man called me on the 'phone."

"I've heard of you, Hotchkiss," he said; "and if we can use your stuff you are going to get our business."

"Now, I do not advertise my products as those made or invented by a blind man. But when a man offers me his business because I have lost my sight, I accept it gladly. If my loss is a handicap, I think I have the right to accept what it brings as an asset, without sacrificing my self-respect."

"I wish that folks laughed more!" he said impulsively. "When I tell a yarn I like to hear people laugh. I cannot see them smile."

"One day, my three first assistants at the factory were in the car with me, and I told a yarn, which was followed by a dead silence. I had a notion it was a funny yarn, and I did not know that the three were sitting there just fairly bursting, playing a trick on me. I waited and waited. Finally, I said very gravely:

"Amen!"

"Then they let loose."

"You have no idea how laughter lightens the hours for the man who cannot see! If you have a friend who has lost his sight, laugh all you can for him."

"I doubt if I shall ever be what is called a 'rich' man. I care nothing for wealth except as accomplishment. Success to me means doing something worth-while."

MARK is the most generous soul alive," one of his business associates said to me. "He not only gives his time and money but he is keenly interested in every employee in his factory. He always hates to let a man go, even if the man has outlived his day of usefulness. His chief worry used to be that his business was largely seasonal, and that he had to let his men off in the winter. Now the work stretches all the year round, and no one is happier than Hotchkiss that his men have work all twelve months."

As we were driving to the station after my visit, Mark Hotchkiss turned suddenly to me.

"I have a notion," he said, with a whimsical twist to his lips, "that you know me quite well."

"I do feel pretty well acquainted," I acknowledged; and then, looking at the kindly face of the man who has battled through so much and has come through scarred but undaunted—perhaps to teach others what may be done if courage never fails—I felt like adding, "And I am proud to know you!"

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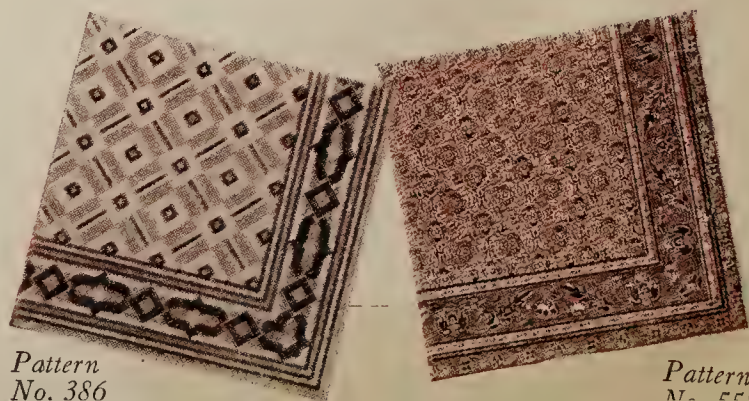
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